

PERFORMANCE AND REGISTRATION INFORMATION SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT (PRISM)

What Is PRISM:

PRISM is a cooperative Federal/State safety program designed to identify motor carriers with deficient safety records, and to tie a motor carrier's safety fitness to the ability to register their trucks. PRISM links the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's (FMCSA) safety information with the state's motor vehicle registration process to achieve two purposes:

- To determine the motor carrier's safety fitness prior to issuing a registration plate, and
- To motivate the unsafe carrier to improve its safety performance through an improvement process and, where necessary, the application of registration sanctions.

The PRISM program includes two major processes – the Commercial Vehicle Registration Process (IRP registration) and Enforcement that work in parallel to identify motor carriers and to hold them responsible for the safety of their operations. The performance of unsafe carriers is improved through a comprehensive system of identification, education, awareness, data gathering, safety monitoring and treatment.

Commercial Vehicle Registration Process:

The International Registration Plan (IRP) commercial vehicle registration process of the states provides the framework for the PRISM program and serves two vital functions. First, it establishes a system of accountability by ensuring that no vehicle is plated without identifying the carrier responsible for the safety of the vehicle during the registration year. Second, the use of registration sanctions (denial, suspension and revocation) provides a powerful incentive for unsafe carriers to improve their safety performance.

The USDOT number is used to identify both the motor carrier responsible for safety and the individual vehicle registrant (if different). The carrier's safety fitness is checked prior to issuing vehicle registrations. Unfit carriers may be denied the ability to register their vehicles.

Carriers, registrants and owner-operators are given information on safety performance. Concerned carriers can take steps to improve their safety. If an owner-operator or a registrant leases to an unsafe motor carrier, the owner-operator or registrant is notified of the carrier's Motor Carrier Safety Improvement Process (MCSIP) status.

Enforcement:

Enforcement is the means by which carrier safety is systematically tracked and improved. The process is designed to improve the safety performance of carriers with demonstrated poor safety performance through accurate identification, performance monitoring and treatment. When a carrier is identified as needing improvement in safety practices, the carrier enters the MCSIP program. Within MCSIP, carriers with potential safety problems are identified and prioritized for on-site reviews using the Motor Carrier Safety Status (SafeStat) program. SafeStat makes maximum use of Accident, Driver, Vehicle and Safety Management data to develop an overall indicator of carrier fitness that is used to prioritize carriers for possible on-site reviews.

PRISM Benefits:

Accountability – Accountability means that safety events affecting a PRISM registered vehicle can be more accurately tied back to the responsible motor carrier via their USDOT Number and Vehicle Identification Number (VIN).

Performance-Based Approach to Safety Management – The primary means for identifying potentially poor performing carriers is through an accumulation of carrier, vehicle and driver-specific safety events that is then linked to the carrier through the carrier's USDOT number and VIN. Carriers are identified, treated and released from a safety improvement program based upon demonstrated highway performance after safety treatments have been applied.

SafeStat – SafeStat is a data-driven, performance-based tool used to identify potentially high-risk carriers for inclusion in MCSIP. Under SafeStat, a carrier's safety performance is assessed based on all available data from roadside inspections, compliance reviews, accidents, enforcement history, etc. This safety information is updated continuously.

Improved Productivity – PRISM has improved the efficiency and effectiveness of Federal and State safety efforts through the efficient allocation of scarce resources; and the use of warning letters as an effective, inexpensive alternative to on-site compliance reviews for carriers with less severe safety problems.

Improved Data Quality – PRISM has improved the accuracy and timeliness of motor carrier data by development of a procedure for obtaining current census and operational data on interstate motor carriers as part of the state's annual vehicle registration renewal process; by the development of a procedure for using plate numbers as a means to more effectively assign inspection and accident data to the responsible motor carrier; and by the use of automated procedures in the field, such as barcodes, to properly assign safety events to the proper motor carrier.

Customer Service –Through the use of the internet, a carrier may obtain a USDOT number online by submitting a completed Motor Carrier Identification Report (MCS-150) to the FMCSA at www.fmcsa.dot.gov. To obtain a blank copy of the MCS-150, contact Computing Technologies, Inc at 1-800-832-5660.

To get more information on PRISM, visit the FMCSA web site at www.fmcsa.dot.gov/factsfigs/prisbro.htm to read the PRISM Brochure.